

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

211338Z Mar 02

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	USNW-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00	EUR-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	/005W			

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1293  
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000748

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR NEARY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/14/12

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: MDC LEADER TSVANGIRAI FORMALLY CHARGED WITH TREASON

REF: A) HARARE 731 B) HARARE 572 C) HARARE 501 D) HARARE 411

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF MATT HARRINGTON. REASONS:  
1.5 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (U) MDC LEADER MORGAN TSVANGIRAI WAS CHARGED WITH TREASON ON  
MARCH 20 IN THE ALLEGED PLOT TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT MUGABE.  
TSVANGIRAI PRESENTED HIMSELF AT THE HARARE CENTRAL POLICE STATION

SIPDIS

FOR FINGERPRINTING, THEN APPEARED AT THE HARARE MAGISTRATE'S  
COURT, WHICH FORMALLY CHARGED HIM WITH THE CAPITAL CRIME. HE  
WAS RELEASED ON A BAIL OF Z\$1.5 MILLION (APPROXIMATELY U.S.  
\$5,000), AND WAS ORDERED TO SURRENDER THE TITLE DEED TO HIS  
HOUSE, WORTH Z\$3 MILLION (APPROXIMATELY U.S. \$10,000).  
TSVANGIRAI WAS ALSO ORDERED TO RELINQUISH HIS PASSPORT AND TO

SIPDIS

REPORT TO THE POLICE ONCE A WEEK. THE PARTY'S SHADOW AGRICULTURE  
MINISTER AND MP FOR GWERU RURAL, RENSON GASELA, WAS ALSO CHARGED  
WITH TREASON BY THE SAME COURT. HE WAS RELEASED ON Z\$ 500,000  
BAIL (APPROXIMATELY U.S. \$1500) AFTER BEING ORDERED TO COMPLY  
WITH THE SAME CONDITIONS AS TSVANGIRAI.

[1](#)2. (U) MDC SECRETARY-GENERAL WELSHMAN NCUBE -- WHO WAS HIMSELF  
RECENTLY CHARGED WITH TREASON IN THE SAME CASE -- PUBLICLY  
DESCRIBED THE FILING OF CHARGES AGAINST TSVANGIRAI AS "AN ATTEMPT  
TO CONTINUE HARASSING THE MDC LEADERSHIP IN ORDER TO STOP US FROM  
RESISTING AN ILLEGITIMATE ELECTION PROCESS." TSVANGIRAI SPECIAL  
ADVISOR GANDI MUDZINGWA TOLD US THAT TSVANGIRAI, GASELA, AND  
NCUBE WILL APPEAR IN COURT ON APRIL 30 FOR AN INTERIM HEARING ON  
COMPLIANCE WITH BAIL CONDITIONS, BUT THAT NO TRIAL DATE HAS BEEN  
SET.

[1](#)3. (C) MEANWHILE, MUDZINGWA TOLD US THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
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FACILITATOR FOR THE INTER-PARTY DIALOGUE HAD ARRIVED ON MARCH 20  
AND THAT THE NIGERIAN FACILITATOR WAS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN THE  
NEXT DAY OR TWO. THE MDC PLANNED TO SHARE WITH THEM THE LIST OF  
NEGOTIATING PRINCIPLES DESCRIBED BY THEIR MP DAVID COLTART IN A  
MARCH 19 CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR (REF A). SEVERAL  
MEMBERS OF THE KEY LEADERSHIP THEN PLAN TO HOLD A ONE-DAY RETREAT  
NEAR THE SOUTHWESTERN CITY OF BULAWAYO MARCH 22-23 TO DETERMINE  
NEXT STEPS.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT: THE FILING OF TREASON CHARGES AGAINST TSVANGIRAI  
LESS THAN 24 HOURS AFTER ZIMBABWE'S SUSPENSION FROM THE COUNCILS  
OF THE COMMONWEALTH DOES NOT AUGUR WELL FOR NEAR-TERM POLICY  
CHANGES BY PRESIDENT MUGABE'S GOVERNMENT NOR FOR THE LIKELY  
SUCCESS OF INTER-PARTY TALKS. WE KNOW THAT PRESIDENTS MBEKI AND  
OBASANJO TRIED TO PERSUADE MUGABE TO DROP THE FLIMSY CHARGES  
AGAINST TSVANGIRAI AND OTHER MDC LEADERS AS A CONFIDENCE-BUILDING  
MEASURE, BUT THE ZIMBABWEAN LEADER RESISTED, APPARENTLY  
EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR THE CASE TO MAKE ITS WAY THROUGH THE  
COURTS.

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